

The Beauty and the Beast?

A Tale of Democratic Crises and Globalization

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ABSTRACT

There are two competing hypotheses concerning the connection between democracy and globalization. The critics hold globalization responsible for an ongoing crisis of democracy. The enthusiasts highlight the positive contributions of financial openness and international political cooperation on the development of democracy. In this contribution the author investigates the interrelation between globalization and the quality of established democracies. He introduces the Democracy Barometer, a new instrument that measures the quality of democracy in 30 established democratic regimes between 1995 and 2005 and that explicitly does not measure sustainable government because it aims at serving as dependent as well as independent variable to explain different economic, societal and natural environment, i.e. sustainable development. Based on this instrument, the author first shows that one cannot speak of an ongoing crisis of (established) democracies. Second, he also conducts several multilevel analyses to model the different developments of the quality of democracy in the different countries. The author then shows that economy, i.e. economic globalization indeed has a positive impact on the quality of democracy. However, this impact is stronger in stable, i.e. older than in younger established democracies. Further investigations show that a high quality of democracy also goes hand in hand with societal and environmental performance.

Keywords: Democracy, Democracy Barometer, Globalization, Quality of Democracy, Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION¹

As every other social construct, democracy is under constant pressure to adapt to societal change. The increasing complexity of economic, social and political problems and their solutions, or the growth of critical citizens with different expectations and demands from 'their' governments are important challenges that established democracies have to face.

Many politicians as well as scientists fear that established democracies are not apt to handle these challenges. Based on empirical findings concerning the loss of confidence in political elites and the citizens' declining support for democracy (Dalton, 2005), democratic nations are believed to experience veritable crises of legitimacy (Pharr & Putnam, 2000).

Usually, globalization is identified as the culprit in the story of the crisis of democracy. Globalization – understood as the economic and financial integration of market societies,

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the political de-nationalization of established democracies in terms of supra-nationalization and regionalization as well as the spread of mainstream culture – is seen as the main source of several obstructions of democracy: reduced autonomy in national policy-making (Cox, 1997; Schmitter, 1996), the emergence of domestic losers resulting in rising income inequality and increasing public discontent (Cox, 1996; Longworth, 1998), the blurring of governmental transparency (Gill, 1995), or a degradation of the concept of citizenship (Sassen, 1996). Thus, several basic elements of a democratic system are thought to be constricted by globalization.

Of course, the crisis argument is not unchallenged in the scholarly debate on the impact of globalization on democracy. Another view suggests the opposite: globalization can even be an opportunity for democracy and enhance its quality (Eichengreen & Leblang, 2008), e.g. by reducing information costs (Diamond, 1992), by enlarging the scope of action for nation states (Gilpin, 1987; O'Riain, 2000), or by the expansion of the electoral marketplace through denationalization (Sassen, 1996). A third view expects no impact of globalization on democracy at all (Fligstein, 2001) or considers the effect of globalization to be overstated (Hirst & Thompson, 1996).

Most of the previous studies who analyzed the relationship between globalization and democracy focused on the impact of economic globalization (in terms of openness of national markets) on democratization, using large country samples which include established democracies as well as autocracies (Brune & Garrett, 2005; Eichengreen & Leblang, 2008). In this contribution, I analyze the impact of globalization in terms of economic market integration and political internationalization on the *quality of established democracies*. I argue that established democracies deal with the challenges of globalization differently and that their success or failure in doing so is reflected in the changes of their quality over time.

However, existing measures of democracy such as the Polity index, the Freedom House index or Vanhanen's index of democratization

are not useful to measure the fine-grained differences in the quality of democracies. To measure these differences, we need a new measure that overcomes the minimalist concepts of former measures of democracy. In this contribution I introduce the Democracy Barometer (DB), a new instrument that measures the quality of established democracies. Of course, the DB is not the only endeavor that aims at measuring the quality of democracy. However, contrarily to other measures such as the Democracy Ranking (Campbell, 2008; Campbell & Barth, 2009) or the Democracy Index of the Economist (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2010), the DB aims at measuring the quality of the democratic political system only. It explicitly abstains from including "the intersections between politics and society" (Carayannis & Campbell, 2010: 56). Of course, the DB does not assume that democracy has nothing to do with society, economy or ecology. However, the aim of the DB is to measure the quality of the political system for being able to investigate how exactly the quality of democracy is linked with societal, economic, or ecologic performance. Such an investigation would not be possible with a too broad concept that embraces political and societal concepts.

Based on the DB, my analyses in this contribution are twofold: *First*, I study the development of the quality of democracy: can we observe an ongoing crisis of established democracies in terms of declining quality? *Second*, I analyze one connection between the quality of democracy and its environment, namely the impact of economic and financial integration and openness as well as of political internationalization on the development of the quality of democracy: Is globalization a danger for the quality of democracies? Or does the beast turn out to be a bewitched prince? Answering these questions is of relevance: in the face of global financial crisis it is important to know how well established democracies are able to adapt to such challenges. Do economic and political crises harm or even undermine established democracies (Puddington, 2009)? Are there remedies? Should the nation state be strengthened to re-legitimate democracy

or should global crises be resolved by more economic openness and stronger international cooperation (Näsström, 2003)?

My contribution proceeds as follows. In the next section, I present the Democracy Barometer, a new instrument in order to measure the quality of democracy. With this instrument at hand, I compare the development of the quality of 30 established democracies between 1995 and 2005. After the description of the data and the method I explain the different patterns of this development by different measures for globalization. In the last section I discuss the findings and show how the DB lend itself to further analyses of the complex connection between the quality of democracy and measures of sustainable government.

THE DEMOCRACY BAROMETER: A NEW INSTRUMENT FOR MEASURING THE QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY

To investigate the impact of globalization on democracy, we need adequate measures for these concepts. In the empirical research on democracy a re-orientation concerning its topic can be observed: The question no longer is whether a system can be considered a democracy or not. Instead, democracy research begins to focus more and more on the identification of the quality of established democracies (Altman & Pérez-Liñán, 2002; Diamond & Morlino, 2004; Morlino, 2004). However, the well-established indices of democracy such as the Vanhanen, Polity, or Freedom House index (Coppedge & Reinicke, 1991; Gastil, 1991; Vanhanen, 2003) are not sensitive enough to measure the subtle differences between established democracies. The main reason for this is their minimalist conceptual basis: democracy is a complex phenomenon and a minimalist measurement cannot do justice to it.

The question however is how the complexity can adequately be conceptualized. Drawing on recent overviews of democratic theory (Held, 2006; Schmidt, 2010), we can distinguish three

different basic concepts: a minimalist liberal model, a participatory model and maximalist model:

1. From a minimalist perspective, democracy is a means of protecting citizens against arbitrary rule. The main aim of the minimalist elitist type is to elect skilled representative elites capable of making public decisions and protecting individual liberty. The people are seen as the final instance that decides which representatives will govern for a predefined span of time. Elections serve to express and aggregate people's interests. Beside electoral participation, the demos is perceived as passive and governed by representatives. This liberal concept of democracy originates from the classical republicanism in its protective version (the most prominent representatives for these ideas are Locke or Montesquieu), the classical liberal model of democracy (as defended by Mill, Tocqueville or the Federalist Papers), and its more modern developments in the form of the elitist (Weber, 1921) or the pluralist models of democracy (Dahl, 1956; Fraenkel, 1963). One of the most pronounced version is Schumpeter's (1950) realist one;
2. In the participatory conception of democracy participation is valued for its own sake and is considered the core of a democracy. Involvement in politics is assumed to foster political efficacy and democratic skills and to generate concern with collective problems. Citizens need opportunities to deal more profoundly with political issues in deliberative ways. In the purest form of the participatory type, the people are seen as the final instance for all or, at least, the most important political decisions. The demos govern directly and actively. The participatory type is rooted in the classical Athenian democracy (Fenske et al., 1994: 37 ff.), the developmental form of classical republicanism (with Rousseau as the most prominent representative), ideas of

direct as well as participatory democracy (Barber, 1984; Pateman, 1970), and deliberative democracy (Cohen & Fung, 2004; Habermas, 1992; Warren, 1996);

3. The third type is based on a maximalist understanding of democracy. It entails the characteristics of the representative and participatory types of democracy, but considers the social prerequisites of citizens as well as political outcomes also essential for fair and meaningful democratic participation. According to the "social democracy" type, the legal guarantee of civil and political rights does not suffice to make democracy work. A government has the duty to guarantee the resources that are necessary for the use of these rights. These resources have to be allocated equally. Equality in this sense implies the complementing of civil and political rights with social rights. Democracies are not only political systems but they have the duty to fulfill certain promises (Bobbio, 1987). The roots of the social type of democracy can be found in liberalist Mill (1991 [1861]) as well as in socialist and social democratic thinking. Important contributions to the development of the social type stem from Heller (1971), Miller et al. (1967), MacPherson (1973), Meyer (2005), Held (2006), Rawls 1971 and Sen 1979, 1996, 1997.

Previous measures of democracy foremost base on minimalist models of democracy. Basing on simple concepts we can distinguish democracies and autocracies but we cannot measure the fine grained differences in the quality of established democracies. The Democracy Barometer detach itself from minimalist models and bases on a middle range concept of democracy embracing liberal as well as participatory ideas of democracy. However, otherwise than new measures for the quality of democracy such as the Democracy Ranking (Campbell, 2008; Campbell & Barth, 2009) we do not rely on the third, maximalist model of democracy. There are at least two arguments for the conceptual

neglect of the third type: First, the social type of democracy, aiming at establishing social equality, concentrates on political outcomes. The here presented measure of the quality of democracy explicitly does not include the outcome dimension,² since it regards democracy as the means by which outputs are decided. Whereas, for example, in the political realm there is no dissent about equality, it is very much disputed within society. Democratic procedures may be based on equality, but what kind of equality and for who is contested, and needs to be decided by democratic means. Whereas there is no conflict about the distribution of political rights, this is not so with regard to social rights and benefits. Democracy is the instrument for delivering approved decisions on such matters. Second, socioeconomic outcomes are by no means simply the result of democratic political decisions. Economic factors and individual decisions also play a major role in determining outcomes within the labour market or concerning the distribution of income and wealth. To judge democracy means to judge the democratic character of institutions and processes, not the contingent results of decisions. Thus, focusing on the outcome dimension neglects the matter of interest: the democratic regime.

Of course, this does not mean that the DB neglects the connections between the political and the societal system. However, the complex relations between the democratic regime, the societal performance, the economy and the environmental performance can only be analysed when we have different measures for these different concepts.

Contrarily to most existing democracy measures, the concept of the DB for measuring the quality of the democratic regime consists of a stringent discussion and theoretical deduction of fundamental elements of democracy in three steps. First, democracy is conceptualized with three fundamental principles: freedom, equality, and control. Second, from these principles nine functions are deduced that are suggested to ensure the three principles. The degree of fulfilling of these nine functions then, third, is

asserted by theoretically deduced components and subcomponents that are measured by different indicators.

Principles

The starting point is the premise that a democratic system tries to establish a good balance between the normative, interdependent values of freedom and equality and that this requires a further principle inherent to democracy: control.

Freedom refers to the absence of heteronomy (Berlin, 2006). The protection and guarantee of individual rights under a secure rule of law have become one of the minimal conditions for democratic regimes (Beetham, 2004). Additional basic rights that ensure democracy are the freedom of association and of opinion that enable a lively and active public sphere (Linz & Stepan, 1996). Freedom is strongly associated with the idea of the sovereignty of citizens that is only possible when all citizens have equally guaranteed political rights (Habermas, 1992). This leads to the second principle: equality.

Equality - particularly understood as political equality - means that all citizens are treated as equals in the political process (Dahl, 1998, 2006) and that all citizens must have equal access to political power (Saward, 1998). Thus, the rather abstract principle of equality leads to a more concrete feature of democratic governance: full inclusion of all persons subject to the legislation of a democratic state. Because “no persons are so definitely better qualified than others to govern that they should be entrusted with complete and final authority over the government of the state” (Dahl, 1998: 75), political equality means equal formulation, equal consideration, and equal inclusion of all citizens’ preferences. Inclusive participation without systematic abstention (Teorell et al., 2007), representation in terms of descriptive and substantive inclusion of preferences (Powell, 2004a) as well as transparency in terms of a culture of openness aiming at preventing information mismatch (Stiglitz, 1999) are required to ensure equality.

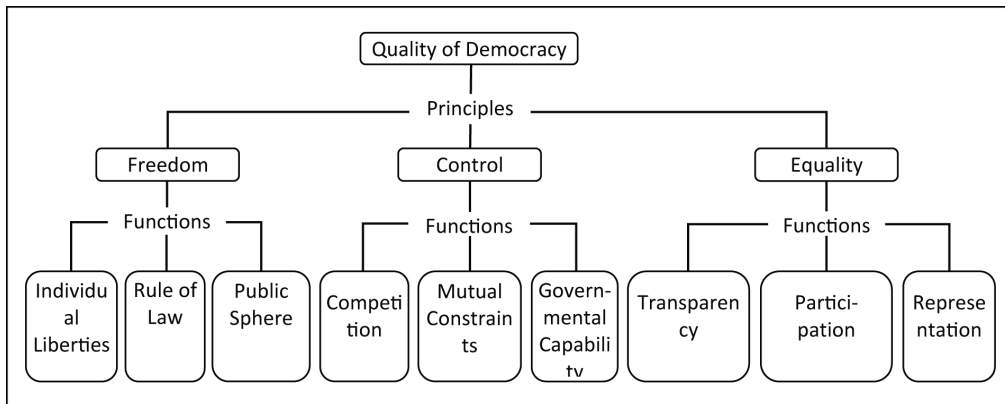
Freedom and equality interact and can constrain each other (Talmon, 1960; Tocqueville (1997 [1835]) but they are not generally irreconcilable (Yturbe, 1997). In order to keep freedom and equality in a dynamic balance, a further fundamental principle of democratic rule is needed: *control*. Of course, control is not a simple auxiliary that balances the two other principles but an important basis of democracy itself: Control is understood to mean that citizens hold their representatives accountable and responsive. Representative democracy thus heavily depends on control of power that is exercised vertically as well as horizontally. Horizontal control functions as a network of institutions that mutually constrain one another (O’Donnell, 2004). These checks and balances ensure that control of the government is not restricted to periodic elections. Vertical control is exercised by means of free, fair, and competitive elections (Manin et al., 1999). It is the elections that allow the citizens to make decisions that balance freedom and equality (Meyer, 2009). Effective elections must be competitive because only competition allows a real choice and induces the political elite to act responsively (Bartolini, 1999, 2000). However, to ensure responsiveness, the result of the elections must be effective. Vertical control would be polluted when the elected representatives lack the capability to govern, i.e., to implement the electoral mandate. Thus, governments need a certain control over the political process, i.e., the capacity to effectively implement collective democratic decisions.

Functions

To guarantee and functionally secure freedom, equality, and control, a democratic regime has to fulfil several functions that are deduced from the three principles (see Figure 1).

In a nutshell, I argue that the quality of a given democracy is high when these nine functions are fulfilled to a high degree. Of course, because of the tension between freedom and equality a simultaneous maximisation of all

Figure 1. The concept tree of the democracy barometer



nine functions is not possible. Democracies are systems whose development is perpetually negotiated by political as well as societal forces. Hence, democracies can weight and optimise the nine functions differently. However, the degree of fulfilment of each of these nine functions can be measured. This requires just another conceptual step: The different functions are based on constitutive components. In the stepwise deduction of the concept democracy, the third step comprises the derivation of these components. Hence, each function is further disaggregated into two components, which finally, lead to several subcomponents and indicators. In the following sections, I give a very short description of the composition of the nine functions (for an extensive description see www.democracybarometer.org):

- **Individual Liberties:** The existence and guarantee of individual liberties is the most important prerequisite for democratic self- and co-determination. Individual liberties primarily secure the inviolability of the private sphere. This requires the *right to physical integrity* (component 1). This component embraces constitutional human rights provisions and the ratification of important human rights conventions that are seen as an indication that a culture maintains the effective right to physical

integrity (Camp Keith, 2002). The effective and real protection of this right is mirrored by the fact that there are no transgressions by the state, such as torture or other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatments or punishments (Cingranelli & Richards, 1999). Furthermore, “[S]tates are only effective in rights protection to the extent that citizens themselves are prepared to acknowledge the rights of others” (Beetham, 2004: 72). Thus, a high homicide rate and violent political actions restrict the effectiveness of the right to physical integrity. The second component comprises a further aspect of individual liberties, the *right to free conduct of life*. On the one hand, this encompasses freedom of religion and freedom of movement. On the other hand, it requires that property rights are adequately protected. Again, these measures distinguish between constitutional provisions guaranteeing the free conduct of life and the effective implementation and impact of these rights;

- **Rule of law:** Individual liberties and political rights (see below) require protection in accordance with the rule of law (Habermas, 1992). Rule of law designates the independence, the primacy, and the absolute warrant of and by the law. This requires the same prevalence of rights as well as formal and procedural justice for all individuals

(Beetham, 2004). *Equality before the law* (component 1) is based on constitutional provisions for the impartiality of courts. Additionally, the legal framework must be independent and it must not be subject to manipulation (O'Donnell, 2004). The *quality of the legal system* (component 2) depends on the constitutionally provided professionalism of judges (La Porta et al., 2004) and on the legitimacy of the justice system. Judicial legitimacy is based on the citizens' confidence in the justice system (Gibson, 2006);

- **Public Sphere:** The principle freedom is completed by the public sphere function. Taking part with others in expressing opinions and seeking to persuade and mobilise support are seen as important aspects of freedom (Beetham, 2004: 62). The communication about politics and moral norms takes place in the public sphere (Habermas, 1992), and a vital civil society and a vivid public sphere are ensured by means of *freedom of association* (component 1) and *freedom of opinion* (component 2). Freedom of association must be constitutionally guaranteed. Additionally, according to the social capital research, a vital civil society relies on the density of associations with political and public interests (Putnam, 1993; Young, 1999). Freedom of opinion presupposes constitutional guarantees as well. In modern, representative democracies, the opinion-making and diffusion within the public sphere is primarily carried out by the media and the media system. Public communication primarily takes place via mass media. Thus, media should provide a wide forum for public discourse (Graber, 2003);
- **Competition:** Vertical control of the government is established via free, regular, and competitive elections. Bartolini (1999, 2000) distinguishes four components of democratic competition, two of which – *vulnerability* (component 1) and *contestability* (component 2) – best conform to the middle-range concept of democracy and the idea of vertical control (Bartolini, 2000). *Vulnerability* corresponds with the uncertainty of the electoral outcome (Bartolini, 2000; Elkins, 1974), which is indicated by the closeness of election results as well as the degree of concentration of parliamentary or legislative seats. Furthermore, formal rules have an impact on vulnerability: district size and the legal possibility of redistricting may influence competition. *Contestability* refers to the stipulations that electoral competitors have to meet in order to be allowed to enter the race. The effective chance of entering is measured by the effective number of electoral parties, the ratio of parties running for seats to the parties winning seats, and by the existence and the success of small parties (Bartolini, 1999; Tavits, 2006);
- **Mutual Constraints:** The horizontal dimension of control of the government is encompassed by mutual constraints of constitutional powers. The balance of powers first depends on the *relationship between the executive and the legislature* (component 1). An effective opposition as well as constitutional provisions for mutual checks in terms of possibilities for deposition or dissolution guarantee the mutual control of the first two branches (Ferrerres-Comella, 2000). Of course, there must be *additional checks of powers* (component 2). On the one hand, mutual constraints are completed by the third branch in the form of constitutional jurisdiction, i.e., the guaranteed possibility to review the constitutionality of laws. On the other hand, federalism is seen as an important means of control. The degrees of decentralisation and the effective sub-national fiscal autonomy are incorporated into the measure (Schneider, 2003);
- **Governmental Capability:** One important feature of representative democracy is the chain of responsiveness (Powell, 2004b). Citizens' preferences are collected, mobilized, articulated, and aggregated by means of elections and translated into parliamentary or legislative seats. The

chain has a further link, namely responsive implementation; i.e., the policy decisions must align with the initial preferences. A responsive implementation, however, requires governmental capability, i.e., the availability of *resources* (component 1) and *conditions for efficient implementation* (component 2). Resources must be available to ensure an effective and impartial implementation of political decisions. Thus, government must count on high public support (Chanley et al., 2000). Furthermore, both a wide time horizon in terms of the length of the legislature and the stability of the government facilitate more continuous and thus more responsive implementation (Harmel & Robertson, 1986). Efficient implementation is more difficult when it encounters opposition from groups of citizens that try to hinder it by means of strikes, demonstrations, or even illegitimate anti-governmental action. Conversely, an efficient bureaucracy can help to facilitate the implementation. Furthermore, the policy making process loses its democratic quality when illegitimate actors exert influence over it;

- **Transparency:** “Secrecy provides the fertile ground on which special interests work; secrecy serves to entrench incumbents, discourage public participation in democratic processes, and undermine the ability of the press to provide an effective check against the abuses of government” (Stiglitz, 1999: 14). Opacity also presents a severe danger for equality. Thus, transparency means *no secrecy* (component 1). Secrecy can take the form of corruption and bribery (Stiglitz, 1999) that are taken as a proxy for low transparency. The unjustified favouritism of particular interests is also linked to rules of party financing. The second component measures whether a democracy offers *provisions for a transparent political process*. The availability of information depends on guaranteed freedom of information (Islam, 2006) as well as on the culture of openness, i.e., the willingness of government

officials to communicate in a transparent way and the informational openness of the media system;

- **Participation:** In a high-quality democracy, citizens must have equal participation rights: all persons who are affected by a political decision should have the right to participate in shaping that decision. This implies that all citizens in a state must have suffrage rights (Banducci et al., 2004). Furthermore, these rights should be used in an equal manner. Equal respect and consideration of all interests by the political representatives is possible only if participation is as widespread and as equal as possible (Lijphart, 1997). Unequal voter turnout in terms of social characteristics or different resources “may mirror social divisions, which in turn can reduce the effectiveness of responsive democracy” (Teorell et al., 2007: 392). Therefore, *equality of participation* (component 1) must be considered. Of course, the *effective use of participation* (component 2) is also important. Based on the idea that high turnout goes hand in hand with equal turnout (Lijphart, 1997), the level of electoral as well as non-institutionalised participation is considered. Additionally, the effective use of participation can be facilitated or hindered by different rules (e.g. voting in advance, or registration);
- **Representation:** Responsive democracies must ensure that all citizens’ preferences are adequately represented in elected offices. On the one hand, this is ensured by *substantive representation* (component 1). High distortion in terms of high disproportionality between votes and seats or in terms of low issue congruence among the representatives and the represented are signs of an unequal inclusion of preferences (Urbinati & Warren, 2008). Structural opportunities, such as a high number of parliamentary seats or direct democratic institutions, can help to better include preferences into the political system (Powell, 2004a). On the other hand, equal consideration of citizens’

preferences is ensured by *descriptive representation* (component 2), especially for minorities. The access to political office for ethnic minorities must not be hindered by legal constraints (Banducci et al., 2004). The DB further focuses on women as structural minorities. Adequate representation of all groups is an important claim for approaches to descriptive representation (Wolbrecht & Campbell, 2007).

Measuring the Quality of Democracy

A new index of democracy must not only adequately specify its concept, but it must also face the challenges of measurement and aggregation (Munck & Verkuilen, 2002). The DB is based on the idea that the degree of fulfilment of the nine functions discussed above can be measured. For this purpose, the components are further divided into subcomponents that are then measured by using several indicators. There is not enough space to discuss each indicator in this paper, but it is worth noting that the DB consists of a total of 100 indicators that were selected from a large collection of secondary data (see www.democracybarometer.org). In order to overcome the shortcomings of previous democracy measures, the final indicators had to meet several criteria. First, indicators that are based on expert assessments are avoided because they are debatable and not very transparent (Bollen & Paxton, 2000). The DB relies on either 'objective' measures or indicators constructed from different representative surveys as often as possible. Second, to reduce measurement errors, indicators from different sources are included for every subcomponent (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2008). Third, the DB tries to avoid 'institutional fallacies' (Abromeit, 2004). The DB is based not only on indicators that measure the existence of constitutional provisions but also on indicators that assess real manifestation. Each component consists of at least one subcomponent measuring rules in law and one subcomponent measuring rules in use.

With regard to the aggregation of the indicators, it is necessary to discuss scaling thresholds. For the DB, these thresholds are set on the basis of 'best practice'. This procedure reflects the idea that democracy should be seen as a political system that continuously redefines and alters itself, depending on ongoing political as well as societal deliberation (Beetham, 2004). Consequently, each given democracy weights the principles and functions differently. A 'blueprint' country sample is defined that encompasses 30 established liberal democracies, i.e., all countries that have constantly been rated as full-fledged democracies by both the Freedom House as well as the Polity index from 1995 to 2005.³ Within this blueprint sample, all indicators were standardised from 0 to 100, with 100 indicating the highest value (i.e., best practice with regard to the fulfilment of the function) and 0 the worst value within the 330 country-years.

The conceptualisation of the DB with its different levels of abstraction further requires the definition of aggregation rules. The first two levels of aggregation – from indicators to subcomponents and from subcomponents to components – are based on arithmetic means. In the following steps (components to functions, functions to principles, principles to 'Quality of Democracy' [QoD]), the idea of the optimal balance is implemented: the value of the higher level is calculated using a formula that rewards high values at the lower level but penalizes incongruence between pairs of values.⁴

CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY?

Scholars who suggest an impact of globalization on democracy can be divided into at least two different camps: On the one hand, there are the critics who hold globalization responsible for an ongoing crisis of democracy. According to them, several shortcomings of actual democracies, such as reduced autonomy in national policy-making (Cox, 1997; Schmitter, 1996), increasing public discontent (Cox, 1996;

Longworth, 1998), the growing intransparency of government information (Gill, 1995), or a degradation of the concept of citizenship (Sassen, 1996), are due to globalization, i.e. to economic and financial integration of market societies as well as political de-nationalization of established democracies in terms of supranationalization and regionalization. On the other hand, there are the enthusiasts who highlight the positive contributions of financial and political globalization on the quality of democracy. By reducing information costs (Diamond, 1992), by enlarging the scope of action for nation states (Gilpin, 1987; O Riain, 2000), by expanding the electoral marketplace through denationalization (Sassen, 1996) or by dispersing ideas for advancing democracy (Ohmae, 1990), globalization is seen as an important accelerator of democratization.

Another issue that the two camps disagree on is the current state of democracies. While the former deplore an ongoing decline and even crisis of democracy, the latter describe a development of worldwide democratization and continuous advancement of democracy. The DB allows investigating whether the critics or the proponents of globalization (or both) are right: Did the quality of established democracies between 1995 and 2005 rise or fall?

Actually, the DB shows a differentiated picture. Looking at the 11-year period of 1995 to 2005, we can observe nine countries where the overall quality of democracy indeed seems to have decreased. This is the case for Italy (-9.3 points of QoD), the Czech Republic (-7.2), Portugal (-5.0), the United States (-2.2), Costa Rica (-1.8), Ireland (-1.4), Australia (-1.3), France (-1.0), and Germany (-1.0). In fact, we could speak of a crisis of democracy in these nine countries, even though the overall decrease is rather small and the development is not linear in all countries. In the remaining 21 countries, the quality of democracy increased over time. While in some countries the improvement is rather small (less than the mean of 4.9 points in Denmark, Hungary, Finland, Norway, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Sweden, Spain, Austria, Slovenia,

Belgium, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and South Africa), other countries enhanced their quality of democracy quite remarkably (more than 4.9 points in Canada, Iceland, Poland, the UK, Malta, Japan, and Switzerland).

Overall, the mean quality of democracy in the sample of established democracies slightly increased from 63.1 to 66.6 between 1995 and 2000 and then slightly decreased to 65.5 in 2005. All in all, this picture neither supports the pessimist crisis hypothesis nor the optimist end of history hypothesis. Nevertheless, the countries not only differ in their degree of quality of democracy but also in their development. The question now is, whether the differences between the countries as well as the development over time can be explained by globalization.

DATA AND METHOD

To measure the quality of established democracies, I use the QoD as described above. The measurement of globalization needs reflection too. Of course, globalization has various connotations. There are many definitions as well as supposed contents and impacts of globalization that depend on the researcher's focus as well as his ideological standpoints (Guillen, 2001; Cox, 1996). There are controversies about the starting point of globalization, about its meaning, its persistence, its irreversibility and its impact. At the very least, there seems to be a consensus that "globalization is a fragmented, incomplete, discontinuous, contingent, and in many ways contradictory and puzzling process" (Guillen, 2001: 238; Giddens, 2000).

It is therefore not surprising that the measurement of the phenomenon is highly debated too. Based on the literature, at least two different groups of proposed measures can be distinguished: economic and political indicators (Guillen 2001; Keohane and Nye 2000). Economic globalization is understood as flows of goods, capital and services through long distance market exchanges; political globalization covers the diffusion of government

policies (Dreher, 2006). To measure economic and political globalization, I use data from the KOF Swiss Economic Institute (Dreher, 2006; Dreher et al., 2008).

Economic globalization is measured by two dimensions. The first dimension, *economic flows*, is quantified (A) by data on trade (import and export of goods and services as a share of GDP), (B) by data on the gross foreign direct investment (FDI; sum of the absolute values of inflows and outflows of foreign direct investment recorded in the balance of payments financial account as a share of GDP), and (C) by data on portfolio investment (sum of a country's stock of assets and liabilities as a share of GDP). Additionally, (D) the sum of gross inflows and outflows of FDI and (E) the stocks of FDI are included. The second dimension, *economic restrictions*, is measured (A) by an index that proxies hidden import barriers (Gwartney & Lawson, 2008) and is based on the Global Competitiveness Report, (B) by the mean tariff rate (also developed by Gwartney & Lawson, 2008), (C) by taxes on international trade (in percent of current revenue), and (D) by capital account restrictions (again based on Gwartney & Lawson, 2008).

Political Globalization is measured by the number of foreign embassies inside a country, the number of international intergovernmental organizations a country is a member of, participation in U.N. Security Council Missions (personnel contributed to U.N. Security Council Missions per capita) and ratified International Treaties (any document signed between two or more states and ratified by the highest legislative body of each country since 1945).

The main aim of this article is the analysis of the relationship between the quality of democracy and these different measures of globalization. To control for the impact of globalization, I include several variables that are suspected to have an influence on the quality of democracy. They can be ascribed to two different theories. On the one hand, based on the *modernization theory* (Przeworsky & Limongi, 1997), it is argued that a country's

economic well-being positively contributes to its regime quality: the wealthier a country and the lower its probability of economic crisis,⁵ the more likely it is to develop a high regime quality (Li & Reuveny, 2003; Muller, 1988). On the other hand, the quality of democracy depends on *human development*. As Inglehart and Welzel state (2005), human development goes hand in hand with the democratic quality of a given regime.⁶ Again, quality of democracy is more probable in countries, where the quality of life is high and access to education is easy for all inhabitants.⁷

The most common research design for a cross-country comparison over time is time series cross-sectional or panel data analysis (PDA). However, for this study of the relationship between the quality of democracy and globalization I use multilevel analysis (MLA), a method that is recently being discussed as a promising alternative for PDA (Shor et al., 2007; Stadelmann-Steffen & Bühlmann, 2008). The idea of using MLA for time series cross-sectional data is to treat observations over time as nested within units (i.e. countries), supposing that the development of the quality of democracy over time (level 1) differs from country to country (level 2).⁸

The advantages of MLA compared to PDA are the better estimation in case of a low number of observations, the better model fit and foremost the higher flexibility in terms of estimating effects of time-invariant variables and the possibility for estimating cross-level interactions (Shor et al., 2007; Stadelmann-Steffen & Bühlmann, 2008). Of course, multilevel analysis has its weaknesses too. First, as with PDA, we must check for the problem of non-stationarity of the data. The discussion of the development of the quality of democracy in the previous section as well as some statistical tests for unit-root show that the dependent variable does not suffer from non-stationarity. Second, autocorrelation of the residuals must also be corrected for. In my models I used difference matrixes for the independent variables (see Rasbash et al., 2009: 71-76).⁹ Finally, the

number of cases (foremost the number of observations) is rather low. Therefore, the results have to be interpreted with care.

GLOBALIZATION AND THE QUALITY OF DEMOCRACY

Given the differences in the development of the quality of democracy among the established democratic regimes, the question arises whether these differences can be explained by globalization. I try to give first answers to this question in a stepwise procedure. First, in an empty model, I look whether there is indeed variance in the development of the quality of democracy between countries. Second, I compare the impact of the different measures of globalization. Third, I check the robustness of this impact by including the control variables. Some additional models give – fourth – a more thorough insight of the varying effect of globalization on the quality of democracy.

The first model in Table 1 depicts the empty model. One can observe that there is indeed significant variance between countries (level 2) as well as within countries, i.e. across time (level 1). In models 2 to 4 I test whether economic or political globalization has an impact on the quality of democracy. In models 2 and 3 I add the two measures separately and in model 4 I test the impact of both indicators simultaneously.

In a nutshell, both indices of globalization – the economic as well as the political globalization – seem to have a positive impact on the quality of democracy. However, controlling for both measures, the positive impact remains only significant for the economic globalization: the more a country is economically embedded into the global market, the higher is its quality of democracy. For the following analyses I decided to take the measure for economic globalization only.

Table 1. The impact of globalization on the quality of democracy

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Fixed Effects				
Constant	65.52 (2.83)	61.78 (2.90)	61.79 (3.19)	60.46 (3.13)
<i>Economic Globalization</i>	-	6.30 (1.76)	-	5.66 (1.95)
<i>Political Globalization</i>	-	-	5.09 (2.15)	2.28 (2.34)
Random Effects				
Time-Level (σ^2)	8.77 (.72)	8.60 (.72)	8.67 (.71)	8.52 (.70)
Country-Level ($\sigma_{\mu 0}^2$)	240.03 (62.12)	217.45 (56.28)	229.10 (59.14)	214.44 (55.46)
Model Properties				
Number of Timepoints (Countries)	330 (30)	330 (30)	330 (30)	330 (30)
-2loglikelihood	1823.22	1804.30	1817.64	1809.21

Non-standardised coefficients (corrected for autocorrelation); SE in brackets; bold: significant at least at the 95%-level; All independent variables rescaled on a scale of 0-1 where 0 indicates the lowest value and 1 the highest value of the variable. All models estimated using MLwiN and RIGLS (see Goldstein and Rasbash 1996).

As discussed in the section above, the quality of democracy not only depends on a country's economic openness. To avoid spurious correlations, further models include the control variables discussed in the previous section (see Table 2): In model 5, the impact of economic globalization is controlled with the variables of the modernization theory. Contrary to the expectations of this approach, the quality of democracy is not higher in wealthy countries. However, victims of economic crisis—measured by inflation—show a significant decline in their quality of democracy: the higher inflation, the lower the quality of democracy. Most important for my purpose is the fact that the impact of economic globalization remains positive and significant. The same holds true for the second group of control variables representing the human development theory (model 6). The positive impact of economic openness on the quality of democracy persists. However, neither quality of life within a country nor the quality of its education seems to influence the development of the quality of a given democracy.

To sum up: the positive impact of economic openness on the development of the quality of democracy holds even when I control for important variables that are suggested to influence the quality of democracy. Given this result and given the observation that countries develop their quality of democracy differently raises a further question. Namely: Are there countries whose quality of democracy benefits more from globalization than others? Using MLA, I can approach this question by modeling country effects and cross-level interaction terms.

In model 7 two country characteristics are estimated: the size of a country¹⁰ and its stability, i.e. the age of a democratic regime.¹¹ As these two variables steadily grow I have taken the mean of the values from 1995 to 2005 to use them as constant country properties. One can observe that the quality of democracy develops better in stable (i.e. old) and small democracies (in terms of the size of the population). Furthermore, economic globalization as well as inflation (level 1) maintain their explana-

tory power. As for the question on the impact of economic globalization, I have tested a last model with two interaction terms composed of economic globalization and the age of a given democracy as well as economic globalization and population size. In model 8, one can see that the strength of the impact of economic globalization differs from country to country (significant random slope effect). This difference can at least partly be explained by the age of a democracy but not by the population size: the more stable a democracy is the stronger is the impact of economic globalization on the quality of democracy. In other words: older democratic regime seems to better taking advantage of economic globalization for the further development of their quality of democracy than younger democracies.

DISCUSSION

In this contribution I analyzed the relationship between globalization and democracy. The main aim of the article was to test the rival hypotheses of the impact of globalization on democracy. On the one hand, it is argued that democracies cannot face important challenges any more and that globalization leads to democratic crises. On the other hand, globalization is seen as the redeemer of democracy: more economic openness and international political collaboration help to diffuse and stabilize democracy. Unlike previous studies, I focused on the impact of economic and political globalization on the *quality of democracy* in established democratic regimes.

To measure the quality of democracy, I introduced a new instrument, the Democracy Barometer. This new measure showed that there is neither reason to assume a crisis nor relentless prosperity of democracy. In the observed time span between 1995 and 2005 eight out of the 30 established democracies show a (non-linear) decline in their quality over time. In the remaining 22 countries I found a (non-linear) positive development between 1995 and 2005.

Table 2. The impact of economic globalization on the quality of democracy

	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Time Fixed Effects				
Constant	61.35 (2.87)	63.92 (4.70)	63.38 (6.34)	66.30 (7.88)
<i>Economic Globalization</i>	9.59 (2.18)	6.46 (1.95)	8.91 (2.12)	-1.03 (6.67)
<i>Modernization</i>				
Wealth (GDP pc)	2.19 (2.61)	-	-	-
Inflation	-5.20 (2.16)	-	-4.19 (1.88)	-3.09 (2.00)
<i>Human Development</i>				
Life-index	-	-3.48 (5.18)	-	-
Education-Index	-	.88 (2.29)	-	-
Country Fixed Effects				
Age of democracy	-	-	20.42 (9.14)	3.77 (12.59)
Population size (log.)	-	-	-17.55 (10.18)	-16.04 (13.10)
Interaction Terms				
Economic globalization * Age of democracy	-	-	-	28.00 (12.10)
Economic globalization * Population size	-	-	-	6.56 (10.93)
Random Effects				
Time-Level (σ^2)	8.46 (.69)	8.54 (.70)	8.42 (.69)	7.57 (.64)
Country-Level ($\sigma^2_{\mu 0}$)	201.12 (51.84)	218.69 (56.27)	178.92 (46.24)	259.60 (80.47)
Impact of Economic Globalization	-	-	-	105.13 (56.27)
Covariance	-	-	-	-105.24 (58.03)
Model Properties				
Number of Timepoints (Countries)	330 (30)	330 (30)	330 (30)	330 (30)
-2loglikelihood	1804.23	1809.72	1798.35	1781.72

Non-standardised coefficients (corrected for autocorrelation); SE in brackets; bold: significant at least at the 95%-level; All independent variables rescaled on a scale of 0-1 where 0 indicates the lowest value and 1 the highest value of the variable. All models estimated using MLwiN and RIGLS (see Goldstein and Rasbash 1996).

I then tested the impact of indicators for economic and political globalization on the different developments of the quality of democracy. The multilevel analyses yielded the following results:

1. Globalization seems to have a positive impact on the quality of democracy. However, it is foremost the economic openness and not the political internationalization that positively affects the quality of democracy. This effect holds even if I control for important further variables. It is worth noting that one of the control variables - inflation - also exerts an influence on the quality of democracy. Apparently, economic crisis in terms of inflation diminishes the quality of democracy.
2. The quality of democracy seems to develop better in small and stable countries; that is in countries with a certain democratic age and with a small population size. Additionally, the stability of a country amplifies the impact of economic openness: the older a democratic regime is, the better it seems to be capable of taking advantage of economic globalization for the further development of its quality of democracy.

All in all, the results seem to support the optimistic point of view concerning the impact of globalization on democracy. Globalization rather seems to be the bewitched prince of the story than a scary beast responsible for democratic crises.

However, the results raise further questions and concerns. Alternative year-wise cross-sectional analyses show for instance that the positive impact of economic globalization decreases over time. Furthermore, considering the current state of worldwide economy, the finding that economic crises seem to have a negative impact on the quality of democracy is alarming. More and especially more detailed analyses are needed to examine this issue. For example, first results not shown here suggest that the negative impact of inflation on the

development of the quality of democracy is absorbed in stable democracies. The age of a democracy seemingly also helps to overcome financial crises. This finding questions to some degree the optimistic view: globalization indeed can be seen an opportunity for democracy and enhance its quality. However, established and stable democracies seem to profit more by open markets than younger democratic regimes.

Additionally, to fully tap the potential of the Democracy Barometer, one should test the impact of the different forms of globalization on different democratic functions. First analyses show that economic globalization seems to have more influence on some of the functions, such as governmental capability and representation, than on others like individual liberty or participation. Furthermore, although political globalization has only low impact on the overall quality of democracy, the correlation between the function transparency and political globalization is quite strong: this could be a sign of reduction of information costs by means of globalization (Diamond, 1992). Contrarily, the correlation between the governmental capability and political globalization is low and even becomes negative over time. This could be interpreted as a sign of reduced autonomy in national policy-making (Cox, 1997; Schmitter, 1996). Thus, a closer investigation is required and the DB can help gaining deeper insight into the connection between globalization and the development of democracy.

Of course, the DB also lends itself to analyses of the complex interconnections between regime quality and the societal environment. As outlined in the theoretical part of my contribution, the DB does explicitly not include outcome measures or to say it with the words of Bobbio (1987) the DB has not included indicators that measure whether a democracy has fulfilled its promises. However, we not only can look at the QoD as a dependent variable explained by economic factors – as done in this contribution. Using the QoD or the functions of the DB as explaining factors, several questions could be addressed: do better democracies also perform

better in social equality? Does a high quality of democracy increases environmental performance of a country?

Of course, such questions would be worth thorough investigations. However, two first very brief and cursory tests of the impact of the QoD on two measures of sustainable government show very interesting results:

1. A simple bivariate test of the correlation between the QoD and the Human Development Index (HDI) that can be seen as a good proxy for the performance of a democracy concerning the quality of life¹² (Carayannis & Campbell, 2010; O'Donnell, 2004) show quite high values. Even if the sample of 30 established democracies does not show a high variance within the HDI, Pearsons r is .54. However, the strength of the correlation between the HDI and the QoD varies between different years. Computing multivariate regressions for every year and controlling for different other factors also used above (GDP, age of democracy, population size), the impact of the QoD on the HDI loses its strength and significance over time;
2. A further brief correlation analysis between the QoD in the year 2005 and the Environmental Performance Index (EPI), measuring a countries' environmental protection efforts¹³ from the year 2006 also depicts at least counterintuitive findings: the bivariate correlation shows only a low and insignificant Pearsons r of .30. In other words: a country with a high quality of democracy measured with the DB does not perform better in protecting the environment than a country with a comparatively low quality of democracy.

Of course, more thorough investigations would be needed to solve these puzzles. However, all in all, these results suggests that the strategy to build measures combining several different concepts run the risk of hiding interesting connections between these different concepts. Whether economic performance, for

instance globalization, really harms democracy or not cannot be for granted. Whether good democracies really have a higher performance in terms of human development or environmental performance must be empirically tested and can change over time.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ The author was co-leader and member of the project-team for the “The Democracy Barometer” within NCCR Democracy. The team is composed of members from the NCCR Democracy, University of Zurich and the Centre for Democracy Studies, in Aarau Switzerland (Lisa Müller, Stefani Gerber, Miriam Hänni, Ruth Kunz, Lisa Schädel, Max Schubiger, Isabel Vollenweider, and David Zumbach) as well as from the Social Science Center in Berlin, Germany (Wolfgang Merkel, Heiko Giebler, Bernhard Wessels, and Dag Tanneberg).
- ² It is not clear which form of outcome should be considered. The discussion of “equality of what” (Rawls 1971; Sen 1979, 1996, 1997) shows that it is neither theoretically nor empirically well-defined which political output helps to establish more social equality (also see Plattner 2004 on this discussion).
- ³ These criteria (FH-scores < 1.5 and Polity-scores > 8 for the whole time-span between 1995 and 2005; more than 250'000 habitants) apply to 34 countries: Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Canada, Cape Verde, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Island, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, Mauritius, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and the USA. However, Cape Verde,

Bahamas, Barbados and Mauritius lack too much data and are therefore sorted out from the blueprint sample. Thus, this paper works with a sample including 330 country-years. Data for 35 additional countries and a time span of 1990 – 2008 will soon be available (www.democracybarometer.org).

- 4 For measuring variation in the quality of democracy properly, the relationships between principles, functions, components, and sub-components have to be translated into aggregation rules, which fit the hierarchical concept of our theory. Our aggregation rule therefore is based on the following six basic assumptions: (1) Equilibrium is regarded as a positive feature. It indicates that (at a certain level), the elements of quality of democracy are in balance. Because the assumption of the underlying theory is that the best democracy is one in which all elements show a maximum performance, and the worst is one in which all elements show a minimum of performance, this is justified. (2) Since we are dealing in the framework of the “blue print countries” with democracies, we cannot apply the simple and strict rule of necessary condition. Instead, a modification, which allows for compensation of poor quality in one element by better quality in another element, is introduced. (3) Compensation, however, cannot result in full compensation (substitutability). The larger the disequilibrium, the lesser the compensation. Thus, disequilibrium must be punished relative to equilibrium. (4) Punishment for equal degrees of disequilibrium should be punished equally, and larger disequilibrium more than smaller disequilibrium. This implies progressive discount the larger the disequilibrium. (5) From this, it follows that punishment is disproportional and that the measure does not follow the rule of the mean but rather progression. (6) Increase in quality is progressive, but with diminishing marginal returns. We assume that, from a certain level on, an increase in quality in one or more elements boosts the quality of democracy, whereas above a certain quality, increases in quality are smaller. Thus, the measure should be progressive and should consider diminishing marginal utility in the increase of quality of democracy when a higher level is reached. In order to achieve progression, multiplication has been applied. In order to achieve diminished marginal returns, we apply an Arctan function: Value of a function = $(\arctan(\text{component1} * \text{component2}) * 1.2/4000) * 80$.

When there are three elements, we use the mean of the pairwise values, i.e.: Value of a principle = $\{[(\arctan(\text{component1} * \text{component2}) * 1.2/4000) * 80] + [(\arctan(\text{component1} * \text{component3}) * 1.2/4000) * 80] + [(\arctan(\text{component2} * \text{component3}) * 1.2/4000) * 80]\} / 3$. The formula is more complex when there are values below 0. A more detailed description of our aggregation can be found in the methodological handbook at www.democracybarometer.org.

- 5 The wealth of a country is measured with its gross domestic product per capita in current prices (US\$); economic crisis is measured with the inflation index (2000 = 100). Source for both indicators: IMF World Economic Outlook Database.

- 6 Of course, both theories suffer from endogeneity: it is not clear whether the quality of democracy depends on economic and human well-being or if economic wealth and human development grow better in high quality democracies. In this article, the aim is not to investigate the relationship's direction but to use the two approaches as controls.

- 7 I use the life expectation index as well as the education index (Gross enrolment ratio) from several Human development reports (1997 to 2008).

- 8 The standard model takes the following form: $Y_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta X_{ij} + \alpha W_j + \mu_{0j} + \epsilon_{ij}$. The quality of democracy in country j at time i can be explained by an overall mean (β_0), time-dependent variables (the X variables and their respective β ; e.g. the globalization indices), time-independent country properties (the W variables and their respective α ; e.g. the age and size of democracy j ; see next section), country variation (μ_{0j} with an assumed mean of 0 and a total between-country variance of σ_{μ}^2), and time variation (ϵ_{ij} with an assumed mean of 0 and a total within-country variance of σ_{ϵ}^2). The overall variation ($\sigma_{\mu}^2 + \sigma_{\epsilon}^2$) is divided into differences at the time level (level 1 variance), that is explained by time-dependent variables, and differences between countries (level 2 variance). Additional cross-level interactions are built by randomising an X variable, i.e. estimating the differences in the strength of its impact between countries and adding a multiplicative term built by this X variable and the country property assumed to have an effect on these different strengths of impact. For a more detailed discussion on MLA I refer to the relevant literature (Jones 1997; Snijders and Bosker 1999).

- ⁹ The covariance between two measurements at year $i1$ and $i2$ on country j takes the form: $\text{cov}(e_{i1j}, e_{i2j}) = \alpha * (1/|t_{i1j} - t_{i2j}|)$ and the autocorrelation is then $\text{cor}(e_{i1j}, e_{i2j}) = (\alpha * (1/|t_{i1j} - t_{i2j}|)) / \sigma_e^2$. For $|t_{i1j} - t_{i2j}|$ we can build difference matrixes. α then has to be estimated to correct for the autocorrelation.
- ¹⁰ I take the mean of the logged population size between 1995 and 2005 (source: US Census Bureau). The impact of size on the quality of democracy is largely discussed in political philosophy (for an overview see Dahl and Tufté 1974). Most authors suggest a negative connection between size and quality. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence of the impact of size on the quality of.
- ¹¹ Age of democracy is measured based on the corresponding variable in the Polity index (durable; see Marshall and Jaggers 2002) and the measure of Persson and Tabellini (2003). Two educated guesses are made in political theory concerning the relationship between the quality and the stability of democracy. On the one hand, it is suggested that aged democratic systems more and more lose the diffuse support and political confidence of their citizens and therefore show a downward trend in quality. On the other hand, it is assumed that young democracies are not stable and risk a loss of quality when they have to face political and economic challenges.
- ¹² The Human Development Indicator combines measures data of life expectancy, education and per capita GNI to assess the quality of the human development within a country. The data can be found in the Human Development Reports, edited by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); see: <http://hdr.undp.org>
- ¹³ The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) measures the environmental health and ecosystem vitality using 25 different indicators (see Esty et al. 2006 and <http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/es/epi/index.html>).

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